



# BACKGROUND

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## Is It Hotter Than Ever?

**Dr. John Christy**, of the Earth System Science Laboratory and member of the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has studied global climate since 1987 at the University of Alabama in Huntsville. He has performed research funded by NASA, NOAA, DOE and the State of Alabama and has been published in the peer-reviewed journals *Science*, *Nature*, *Journal of Climate* and *The Journal of Geophysical Research*.

Regarding Administration reports that this year is the hottest on record, he recently told Congress extreme events are "misleading" as indicators of climate change:

- Vice President Gore was wrong when he proclaimed June was the hottest month on record. Climate records in the Southeast show June 1914, 1921, 1936, 1943, 1952 and 1953 were all hotter months than June 1998.
- Weather satellite data over the past 20 years still show no warming trend, only a recent slight increase from the lack of volcanic activity.
- The Administration's assertions rely on quick and inaccurate snap shots of weather while ignoring the true temperature records.
- Temperatures we are seeing are still being affected by *El Niño* because the heat is concentrated in the tropics (between 30°N and 30°S) rather than in higher latitudes.
- While July is the hottest month in any year, the most important factor is the national "above average" temperature. Currently, these temperatures have been dropping, indicating that the *El Niño* effect is gradually waning.

April -- .71° above average  
June -- .55° above average

May -- .64° above average  
July -- .55° above average

- There is no evidence that global warming makes for more frequent or more severe *El Niños*. A thousand years ago, when temperatures were warmer than today, studies indicate that *El Niños* virtually disappeared.

*The Global Climate Coalition is an organization of trade associations and private companies established in 1989 to coordinate participation in the scientific and policy debate on global climate change. For more information, contact Frank Maisano, (202) 628-3622 or Dr. John Christy, (256) 922-5763.*

